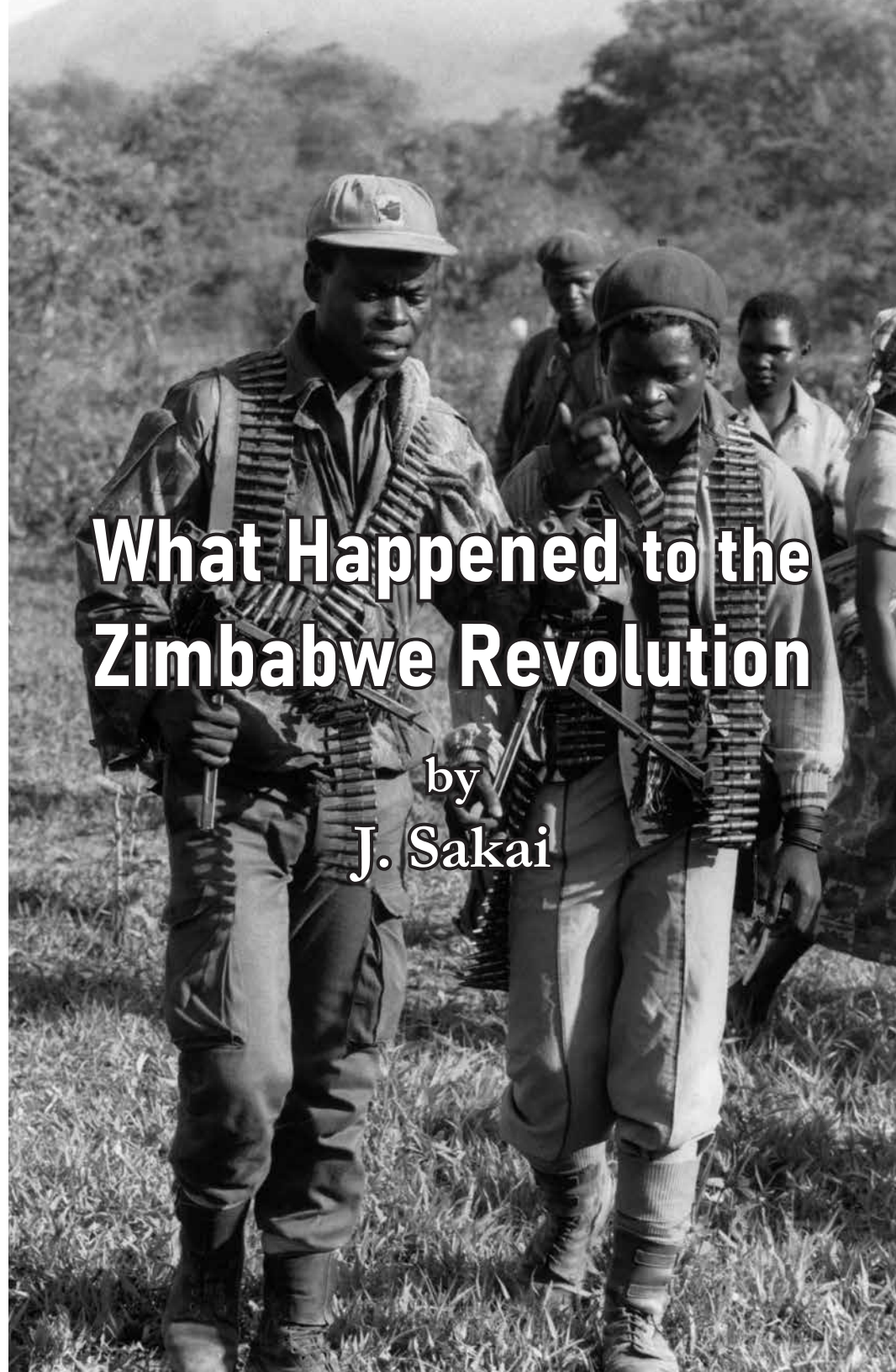


The imperialist experience gained in suppressing the '60s movement in the New Afrikan ghettos here was used in Zimbabwe. We can say that if you don't understand Zimbabwe, that you probably don't yet understand Amerika.

What Happened to the Zimbabwe Revolution

by
J. Sakai



ialism. This is the final success of neo-colonial subversion of the armed struggle.

The Zimbabwe masses made revolution. Shackled with worthless, petty-bourgeois leadership, still they struggled forward and gave their lives to liberation. If their revolution was deflected, it is also true that Zimbabwean life was transformed—and will never again be the same. Socialist ideas are openly discussed. The politics of popular change has been demonstrated to all. Settler-colonialism's suffocating death-mask has been smashed forever.

* * *

Many comrades here still give “solidarity” to ZANU-PF; this is the same as objectively covering for CIA-backed counter-insurgency because of ignorance (or in some cases opportunism). Some comrades know “something is wrong” with the new Zimbabwe regime, but are afraid to either question openly or investigate. The same phenomenon of a romanticized and deliberately simple-minded view applies to Mozambique-apartheid regime “détente.” This just weakens us, since the difficulties of the real world can only be overcome, not ignored. We all in some measure share this infection. It is linked to the fear that unless we fix our minds only on the super-positive—“heroic” guerrillas, “communist” parties, “inevitable” victories—that we will get undermined and blown away by our own uncertainties. Scientific socialism is just that: critical, a weapon of the oppressed classes against the oppressing classes, a guide to practice. To change the world we must change ourselves.



Robert Mugabe's brother Albert became the first General Secretary of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions. But a financial scandal broke out. On December 2, 1981, Albert Mugabe was found floating dead, fully dressed, in the deep end of his private swimming pool behind his ranch house. It is normal in ZANU-PF for "socialist" trade-union leaders to live the suburban European lifestyle. But when the temporary administrator delivered his report on the ZCTU, it was embarrassing to the neo-colonial regime: the ZCTU was totally bankrupt and being evicted from its offices; Albert Mugabe had kept no financial records, not even using checks—all funds were withdrawn by him and other officers in cash. The only good news was that the administrator said that the workers weren't paying their dues.

To keep the ZCTU offices together, the same old International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) stepped in to pay the officials' salaries. Why would the "AFL-CIA" pay to keep the ZCTU going? Because it is serving as a central agency for imperialist supervision of Zimbabwean workers. Recently, the African-American Labor Center (AALC) has been subsidizing ZCTU activities. The AALC was founded by the CIA to officially "encourage labour management co-operation to expand American capital investment in the African nations."

It was symbolic when the Mugabe regime made the guerrillas turn in their AK-47s and Kalashnikov rifles. The fighters were retrained by British imperialist instructors as regular army units, and rearmed with the NATO rifles used by the former settler army. People's Courts and other ties with the masses were ended; the fighters regrouped in new bases. They now are a standard capitalist army, living as parasites (soldiers earn three or four times what plantation laborers earn) whether they like it or not. Their role now is to police their own people. Again, we recall that in 1977 Andy Young said that the task in Zimbabwe was "dismantling the guerrilla army and retraining it to be a police force." For imper-

What Happened to the Zimbabwe Revolution (S1, 1984)

In hard times we must face hard truths.

We must stop viewing armed struggle in a romanticized and deliberately simple-minded way. The same thing applies to national movements. There are three reasons why this is imperative.

1. With no practical, communist understanding of what is going on in liberation wars between oppressed and oppressor nations, solidarity work is very underdeveloped.
2. Since in the real world things are not so simple as comrades here in the U.S. desperately try to believe, quite often imperialism is several jumps ahead of us. All too often the "movement" has been raising funds or holding rallies for what in reality is an ally of U.S. imperialism.
3. A romanticized and ignorant view of armed struggle in Afrika, Asia, and Latin Amerika may be fine for a cheerleader team, but when comrades who suffer from this infection try to do armed activity themselves they naturally do so in a romanticized and ignorant way. Ours is now a road partially blocked with political-military wrecks in the first hundred yards. It is not an accident that people who failed to see the decisive political-military problems of their own work in recent years are still uncritical of their support of President Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe. It is not an accident that those who learned nothing from Zimbabwe are ignorant about El Salvador. At some point repeated ignorance is not innocent, but is a deliberate choice in politics.

Recent developments in Southern Afrika have been a blow. Many comrades are surprised and upset at the South Afrikan government's success at maneuvering socialist Mozambique and Angola into cooperation with it. Once new liberated nations bordering white apartheid South Afrika were thought to be a launching pad for a decisive war to liberate South Afrika. Now, Mozambique has apparently been bent into some limited cooperation with the apartheid regime, becoming a buffer state to keep Black South Afrikan guerrillas disengaged in exile.

These contradictions did not grow overnight, but have been ten years in the making. **The "key" event was when U.S. imperialism stopped the Zimbabwean Revolution.** How imperialism stopped this revolution must be understood—not only for its own sake, but because of what it tells us about the larger situation. **Imperialism did so by penetrating the liberation movement itself,** making a neo-colonial alliance with the petty-bourgeois leadership. Class unites with class. Neo-colonialism used the armed struggle against itself, having the Zimbabwe freedom fighters unknowingly bring into power imperialism's own agents. This regime of Prime Minister Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF party shields itself by using the socialist and national liberation identity of the movement it betrayed and struck down.

These contradictions are class contradictions within the oppressed nations. To not understand them is to not see the class and national factors that imperialism—quite concretely including the CIA—tries to use in **neo-colonial counter-insurgency.** The imperialist experience gained in suppressing the '60s movement in the New Afrikan ghettos here was used in Zimbabwe. We can say that if you don't understand Zimbabwe, that you probably don't yet understand Amerika.

tory." Mugabe and Tongogara, finally free to express themselves, ended up embracing Jimmy Carter and Ian Smith.

The neo-colonial "oneness" was far more than diplomacy. Mugabe's ZANU-PF government began by announcing its loyalty to two of U.S. imperialism's main policies: protection of U.S. corporate investments and "détente" with the South Afrikan settler regime. Andy Young was right that "Zimbabwe Holds the Key"—today's Mozambique-apartheid regime accord just follows in Zimbabwe's footsteps. President Mugabe sent a message in his election victory press conference:

"We cannot get them away even if we wanted to. The reality is that we have to co-exist with them, and co-exist on the basis of mutual recognition of the differences that exist between us. In other words, we should pledge ourselves, if South Africa does so on its part, to noninterference in South African affairs and they to noninterference in our affairs."

What Mugabe means by "noninterference in South African affairs" is really "noninterference" in the settler-colonial oppression. ZANU-PF, when its own movement was based in other nations, always swore to do likewise for Namibia and South Afrika. In one typical 1975 interview, Kumbirai Kangai (now Secretary of Labor) said: **"But once Zimbabwe is liberated, if we create a government which limits its concerns to the boundaries of Zimbabwe, then I think we will have sold out the whole cause. I believe it is our international obligation to continue in a concrete way to advance the struggle beyond the borders of Zimbabwe."** Now Kangai has a Mercedes and the South Afrikan guerrillas are barred from Zimbabwe. Washington is "loved" but the Afrikans who are trying to fight the Boers are not.

The CIA is pleased with ZANU-PF as well. To take one example we have already brought up: CIA contact with Zimbabwean unions has not been halted, but has intensified.

from the same home area, that they should team up and watch out for “their” area’s interests in Parliament. In fact, Tongogara fondly recalled Smith’s mother:

“Tongogara impressed Smith with his open approach, and even asked about his mother who used to give him candy as a child when his father worked on Smith’s father’s farm: ‘If I get home while the old lady is still alive,’ he said, ‘that would be one of the greatest things for me—to say hello, ask her about the sweets and whether she still has got some more for me.’”

In that same vein Mugabe and U.S. imperialism—now loved by ZANU-PF—traded endorsements. Andy Young in his *N.Y. Times* column, “Zimbabwe Holds the Key,” indicated U.S. favor of Mugabe in the upcoming elections. While Young put down Joshua Nkomo and ZAPU (“**Joshua Nkomo seems to be the implied, if secret, favorite of the British, the Russians, Ian D. Smith and South Afrika.**”), he boosted Robert Mugabe: “Robert Mugabe’s Zimbabwe Afrikan Liberation Army is credited with most of the military success that led ultimately to control of much of the countryside ... when I asked a British Foreign Office delegation, ‘Which of the black leaders would you trust to run your family business in your absence?’ they unanimously named Mr. Mugabe ...” What a recommendation.

After his party’s victory in the April 1980 elections, Mugabe had a very friendly visit to the U.S. In Harlem thousands cheered as President Mugabe, practiced at using just the right words to imply Pan-Afrikanism and radicalism, said: “Long live our oneness—long live our struggle!” But in Washington, fulfilling his end to the love-fest, Mugabe endorsed U.S. President Carter for re-election in the warmest terms: “It is this admiration we feel for you that leads me to wish you well in the race you are running. **Unfortunately this race is being run in the United States. If he was running in our territory, he would be assured of vic-**

I. The Generals of Neo-Colonialism

The search for a neo-colonial weapon to kill the Zimbabwe Revolution began with a political struggle within U.S. imperialism. While we are most familiar with imperialism’s traditional strategy—keeping the Afrikan masses down through the repressive settler-colonial regime—this is not imperialism’s only option. **Many imperialist officers in the CIA, the State Department, the Council on Foreign Relations, the planning staffs of many multi-national corporations, saw the long-term necessity of indigenous neo-colonialism rather than European settler-colonialism in Afrika. Even in the form of “neo-socialism.”**

There has been an intense policy struggle within the imperialist camp between those who favor the traditional option of military repression and those who favor the neo-colonial option of embracing and subverting the national liberation movements. (Imperialism actually uses both weapons, and neither will ever completely replace the other.)



W. Anthony Lake

Within the imperialist state a so-called radical grouping on Afrikan strategy formed during the 1970s.

Until 1976 the most visible member of this tendency was W. Anthony Lake, a career State Department officer. He was the perfect, almost stereotype, elite liberal: a product of private schools, of Harvard, Cambridge, and Yale. By 1970 Lake had served in Saigon and had

advanced to the White House. He was Special Assistant to Henry Kissinger on the National Security Council staff. In a surprising move Lake openly broke with the Nixon-Kissinger conservative line, resigning in protest over the destabilization of Cambodia.

Although in exile from government, W. Anthony Lake rose still higher in imperialist policy-making circles. He became a focus in the preparations for new imperialist strategy in Afrika. Lake became a familiar figure in discussions in the Rockefeller-based Council on Foreign Relations. In 1971–72 he was foreign policy coordinator for U.S. Senator Muskie's Presidential campaign. At a time when most foreign policy attention was fixed on Southeast Asia, Lake argued for the importance of Afrika to U.S. world interests.

As director of the Special Rhodesia Project of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Lake organized Congressional liberals against U.S. support for the Smith regime of "Rhodesia." He had become, in an insider's sense, a foreign policy star. So much so that in 1973 conservative William Safire, writing in his *New York Times* column on "The Next Kissinger," said that "a liberal-activist President might go for Anthony Lake as his foreign policy advisor."

In 1977 such a "liberal-activist President" did come to power. And the new Carter Administration was faced with a crisis in Zimbabwe. The old Nixon-Kissinger policy of relying on the European settlers of "Rhodesia" had failed. Afrikan guerrillas were knocking out imperialist defenses, mobilizing the masses, and on the verge of unconditional military victory. The CIA reported that the Smith regime had only a short time to live. Another U.S. fiasco was near in the chain of humiliating defeats that stretched from Vietnam to Angola.

The Carter Administration charged into the crisis, pushing through a sharp change in strategy. There was an accompanying shake-up in personnel. W. Anthony Lake came back as State Department Director of Policy Planning. Richard M. Moose became Assistant Secretary of State for Afrika. A former Lake ally on the National Security Council staff in 1969,

obnoxious in some of its racial provisions, the fact remained that the main reason for going to war had been removed ..."

Neo-colonial civil rights meant that the new petty-bourgeois elite would soon be cabinet ministers. Josiah Tongogara as a youth had to leave for Zambia in search of education and opportunity. There he finally gained a "good" job for an Afrikan—bar manager at a white club. We can sense his joy at Lancaster House, as this now-powerful general looked forward to a bourgeois life. Before reporters he proposed that since he and "Rhodesian" Prime Minister Ian Smith came



Villagers are searched before entering one of Rhodesia's "protected villages"

Carrington. The final result was outrageous: Afrikan government by bourgeois elections, protection for all capitalist investments, all settler plantations to keep the land they actually occupy except through cash government purchase, all settler police, army, land, and officials to have guaranteed pensions paid by the new Afrikan government, no changes to the constitution for ten years except through unanimous Afrikan and settler vote in the Parliament.

The revolution was stopped short of victory. The Zimbabwe masses ended the oppressive settler rule, but did not get their land back, could not expropriate the imperialist holdings, could not, in fact, solve their urgent class needs. But the new Afrikan elite saw their own class prosperity coming. And the front-line states mistakenly thought that this imperialist deal meant stability and economic recovery. President Samora Machel hailed Conservative Margaret Thatcher as **“the best British Prime Minister for 15 years because she had the courage to solve the Rhodesia problem. Our aims for Zimbabwe were the same. It was just our tactics that differed.”** British imperialism and the Mozambique Government had the same “aims,” only different “tactics.”

The Martin and Johnson *Struggle for Zimbabwe* explicitly erases liberation and socialism as goals for the freedom fighters. ZANU-PF's **main** goal, this Mugabe-authorized account says, was bourgeois elections. They describe the Lancaster House negotiations:

“There was only one way to end the war, and that was to agree to a new internally acceptable constitution and to the holding of new British-supervised elections. Once an independence constitution had been agreed on there was really no way out for either side. The main principles the guerrillas had been fighting for—one man one vote elections, majority rule and independence—were all contained in it and even if the constitution was flawed on points of detail and

Moose was a key mover within the Senate Foreign Relations Committee staff in cutting off funding for Kissinger's ill-fated 1976 war in Angola. “Rhodesian” settler officials, bitter at their abandonment by Washington, started the double-entendre that “The Moose drinks in the Lake.”

The *Washington Post* reported: **“The Carter Administration, emphasizing its bolder support for Black majority rule in Afrika, is replacing the top officers at the State Department's Bureau of African Affairs ... Two of the present three Deputy Assistant Secretaries in the African Bureau also are scheduled for replacement, informed sources said, with a fourth deputy to be added on economic policy. Officials deny ‘any purge’ ...”**

Although the small group quickly reshaping U.S. Afrika strategy was chaired by Vice-President Mondale, the real star was UN Ambassador Andy Young. For years, as a Civil Rights leader, Young had visited Afrika as a fellow activist and friend of liberation struggles. He had international stature as one of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.'s chief aides in King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). In South Afrika the authorities had allowed him to meet with an imprisoned Robert Sobukwe, the founder of the Pan Africanist Congress. Young took Sobukwe's two children back into his own home in Atlanta; they were raised as part of his family. These well-publicized personal ties to Mother Afrika made Young the best possible advance-man for imperialism's courtship of Afrikans. This was not just a cosmetic touch. The Andy Youngs and Jesse Jacksons have a practical understanding of mass Third World movements that a Kissinger will never have.

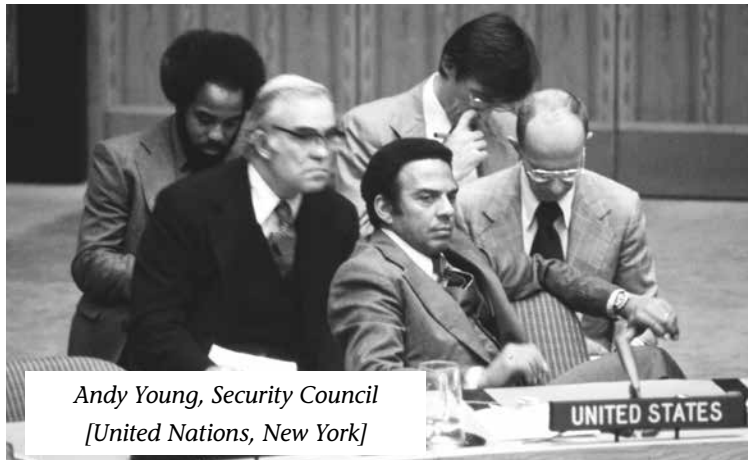
Led by Andy Young and W. Anthony Lake, the small Carter Administration group on Afrika strategy laid down a realistic view of imperialism's options. Two key points in their assessment were: **1. U.S. imperialism, irregardless of what anyone thinks, is unable to defeat communism in Southern Afrika by military means; 2. U.S.**

strategy on Afrika must take into account the ever-present danger of mass uprisings in New Afrikan ghettos here. These points were interrelated, in fact.

Of the three existing military options, two had failed and the third was too dangerous to use. The settler-colonial regimes had been militarily broken in Portuguese Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique. Settler-colonialism in “Rhodesia” was losing its war, and South Afrika, the last settler-colonial fortress, thought the “Rhodesian” situation so hopeless that it had been looking for a neo-colonial solution since 1974. Kissinger’s fantasy of CIA mercenary armies substituting for the U.S. Army and Marines had been totally smashed in Laos, Cambodia, and Angola. The third military option, of direct intervention à la Vietnam, was suicidal in Afrika.

Andy Young said it all: “I see no situation in which we would have to come in on the side of the South Africans ... **You’d have a civil war at home.** Maybe I ought not to say that, but I really believe it. **An armed force that is 30 percent Black isn’t going to fight on the side of the South Africans.**”

So U.S. imperialism’s ultimate option of superpower invasion was ruled out because of their fear of Afrikan mutiny and “**civil war at home.**” This was not only Andy Young



*Andy Young, Security Council
[United Nations, New York]*



protect imperialist investments. At the same time Zvobgo was telling U.S. corporations that large cash contributions to ZANU-PF would be remembered after independence. Imperialism was in command, with CIA penetration reaching the political center of the people's movement.

IV. Civil Rights Instead of Liberation = Neo-Colonialism

Zimbabwe's liberation war was formally ended in November 1979, at Lancaster House in London. A neo-colonial settlement was inevitable. The purpose of the British-U.S. conference was not to free Zimbabwe, since liberation through unconditional military victory was at hand. We should remember that even as early as 1977 British Foreign Secretary Crosland told NATO that the guerrillas would inevitably win unless there was an imperialist settlement:

"... there would be no doubt over who would eventually win on the battlefield. But if the issue were settled on the battlefield it would seriously lessen the chance of bringing about a moderate African regime in Rhodesia and would open the way for more radical solutions ..."

So the only purpose of the conference was to enforce a pro-imperialist deal. And the fix was in. The front-line states, having eliminated any guerrilla grouping resisting a settlement, were still demanding peace on almost any terms. Mugabe had committed himself as well, needing an international agreement to explain why ZANU-PF couldn't deliver on its war-time promises. Tongogara said: **"We just have to have a settlement. We can't go back empty-handed."**

Although imperialism had lost the military war, it thus held the whip hand at the bargaining table. Mugabe's pathetic little request for a few radical points he could use to cover-up the sellout was sternly rejected by British Lord

speaking. The intelligent white elements of the imperialist forces shared this concern. They take seriously the revolutionary possibilities of the New Afrikan masses. The Rockefeller Commission on "Critical Choices" wrote on Afrika policy: "Among other considerations, Americans should recognize that the effects of a major race war in Afrika would extend far beyond that continent, with the ominous prospect of encouraging further racial polarization in the United States."

W. Anthony Lake perceptively said: "One should also consider the possible impact on our society if a racial conflict in Southern Africa were to escalate dramatically, **if televised reports of Black and white bloodshed were to become even fractionally as familiar to American living rooms as the bloodletting in Indochina became in the 1960s. In short, the domestic divisiveness of the issue makes Southern Rhodesia all the more dangerous a problem for the United States.**"

So the Carter Administration pursued the search for a "peaceful," neo-colonial solution. By publicly pulling away from the white settler-colonial regimes, by publicly claiming to support the goals of the liberation struggles, U.S. imperialism was repositioning itself to find Afrikan allies. Their goal was to disarm the guerrillas, stop the revolutionary process, and usher in pro-Western, bourgeois Afrikan governments. **This would also help reinforce the same politics here in the New Afrikan communities.** Zimbabwe, Andy Young insisted, was "the key."

This broad turn towards co-optive neo-colonialism was also shared by the other regimes involved in Zimbabwe, by Britain and South Afrika. There were significant differences between them, however. The South Afrikan regime wanted a puppet Afrikan government under its hegemony. Britain wanted the most bourgeois Afrikan regime, stable and protective of British investments, that it could set up, providing that at least part of the guerrilla leadership was involved (since London understood that no regime without those credentials could defuse the liberation war.)

U.S. imperialism had, for once, the most sophisticated strategy. On the surface, Washington would call for Afrikan majority rule in Zimbabwe—and then let Britain take the leadership (as the former colonial power) in international negotiations. This modest attitude was unusual coming from Washington. One of Lake's criticism's of Kissinger's Afrika strategy was that "Super-K" had foolishly catapulted U.S. imperialism into the spotlight as the No. 1 power, the No. 1 ally of South Afrika, the No. 1 Western power fighting in Angola and Zimbabwe. Out of which U.S. imperialism only got further exposed as the No. 1 enemy of liberation. And lost the wars, too.

Lake's line on Zimbabwe was to let Britain run the risks and take the responsibility: "The aim was a low posture on the issue; Washington would follow London's lead and try to hide behind British skirts in the face of African pressures for more forceful action against the Smith regime." **All the while Andy Young, as chief U.S. negotiator on the issue, would openly sympathize with the Zimbabwe freedom fighters while building relationships.**

This was the innovative thrust of U.S. imperialism's new Southern Afrika strategy. While white settler South Afrika wanted an Afrikan puppet who had no involvement in liberation, while Britain wanted the most bourgeois Afrikan leaders it could install, Young and Lake gambled that U.S. imperialism could win over the main guerrilla leadership itself—that of the ZANU-PF Party. After all, who could better cover for neo-colonial betrayal than the political leadership of the guerrilla armies?

Andy Young was counting on several hidden factors working for imperialism within the Zimbabwe Revolution. The first was that, just as in the U.S. Empire, Afrikan national independence movements contain within them different classes and political forces. Much of the Afrikan petty-bourgeois leadership has always wanted, first and foremost, the "freedom" to become capitalists and Europeanized. Young's most remembered quote is about this not-so-secret

colonial ideas had to be packaged in a militant-sounding way. Mugabe and Zvobgo moved the party's journal, *Zimbabwe News*, to Illinois, USA. This may appear like an odd place to headquarter a Zimbabwe liberation activity, but it allowed editor Zvobgo to change the politics without interference. In the January–May 1976 issue Zvobgo, in a signed editorial, appealed for U.S. imperialism to support Mugabe's ZANU-PF party. He wrote then:

"What policy should America adopt—if it wants to (a) succeed, (b) to be respected and hopefully (c) to be loved in Southern Africa? We suggest the following—

"On Zimbabwe: Support ZANU and its armed forces in their armed struggle against the Ian Smith racist regime. Discard Joshua Nkomo, Bishop Muzorewa and Ndabaningi Sithole ... There are no other options available for the U.S. if it is tired of supporting losers. The current American policy of supporting settlers is going to hurt. Union Carbide, AMAX, Foote Minerals and other American corporations now sustaining the regime are going to receive short-swift treatment from a revolutionary Zimbabwean Government—on account of U.S. myopic policies."

There is only one way to interpret this surprisingly upfront message: 1) That U.S. imperialism might "**succeed**" and even be "**loved**" in Afrika by supporting ZANU-PF against the Smith regime—this says to the fighters that U.S. imperialism might become their "loved" ally, instead of an enemy. 2) That the fighters should want U.S. imperialism to back ZANU-PF against Nkomo, Muzorewa, Sithole and other Afrikan politicians—this says that superpower intervention in the affairs of the Zimbabwe people is OK if it's backing ZANU-PF. 3) That the U.S. minerals corporations will be "hurt" after liberation not because all exploiters will be expropriated, but only because of wrong U.S. government "myopic policies"—this says that a changed U.S. policy will

Fletcher graduate, as were the two U.S. Ambassadors before him. The foreign trainees are all those being groomed for the international pro-U.S. elite. Argentina's current Economics Minister, leading his government back to a tight U.S. relationship after the Falklands fiasco, is another Fletcher alumnus. As is Edison Zvobgo, supposedly an Afrikan "anti-imperialist."

Zvobgo graduated from Fletcher in 1974. Promptly he was admitted to Harvard Law School. By 1975 he was Professor of Law at Lewis University in Illinois, living in an expensive suburban house, driving an expensive new car. Quite a distance to travel in only three years after leaving prison in Zimbabwe. He had an influential "Uncle."

The CIA's small investment in Zvobgo paid off in 1975-76. A split in ZANU provided an opportunity for Zvobgo to re-enter the leadership of the movement. He immediately began agitating for Robert Mugabe's elevation to ZANU President. Most important of all, as Zvobgo became active again he regularly flew back to Afrika, visiting guerrilla camps in Zambia, Tanzania, and Mozambique. The CIA had been worried about the new, more radical ZIPA guerrillas. Since once in camp each fighter adopts a "war name" to protect his family and cover his background, the CIA had no idea who not only the ordinary fighters were, but in many cases no idea who new commanders and political commissars were. Moreover, they were uncertain as to the new ideological currents. Zvobgo, under the cover of "chats" with U.S. State Dept. Afrika Bureau officials, transmitted to the CIA regular reports on the guerrillas. This was security identification information: real family names and background, political tendencies, friends, military position and unit, and so on. Zvobgo helped arrange for Robert Mugabe and the U.S. Government to reach a secret understanding.

Even before the 1979 Lancaster House Conference in London, at which Zvobgo was a ZANU-PF delegate, he had become increasingly active pushing a pro-U.S. orientation within the liberation movement. Naturally, these neo-

attraction: **"At the junction of Jomo Kenyatta Avenue and Uhuru Avenue in Nairobi I saw a sign. It read: 'Kentucky Fried Chicken.'"**

In March 1980, Andy Young wrote very happily on how the emerging petty-bourgeois leadership in Zimbabwe "will join a Southern Africa bloc that has been very pro-United States and anxious to establish economic ties to the West ... everyone will be a winner." This, he said, included even the guerrilla leadership everyone in the West thought was so radical:

"Zimbabwe will begin with a greater per-capita trained Black leadership and a larger Black middle class than any other African nation at the time of independence ... One burly bearded guerrilla leader pulled me aside during negotiation attempts in Malta in 1978 and, as I prepared to be attacked as a 'tool of imperialism,' he quietly asked: 'What **really** happened to the Oakland Raiders? They were supposed to be in the Super Bowl!' Like many of his fellows he had studied in America for nine years and had made many friends there. Later I was able to identify at least 30 Patriotic Front freedom fighters with post-graduate degrees from American universities."

The other hidden factor Young was counting on was the front-line Afrikan states. While U.S. imperialism could not reach the 30,000 Zimbabwe guerrillas, it might be able to get the host Afrikan states to disarm the guerrillas. In June 1977 Andy Young was interviewed on Public TV's *MacNeil-Lehrer Report*. He dramatically said that the Smith regime could fall within 18 months, and that plans were needed to deal with the new Afrikan government that would emerge.

Most important, said Young, was that joint plans to disarm the liberation forces had to be made with the front-line states: "These plans cannot be just British and American ... I think we cannot deal with these problems 5,000 miles away. **The people there on the border are going to have to**

take responsibility for dismantling the guerrilla army ..." That month Presidents Carter and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania had made a private understanding to cut short the Zimbabwe liberation war by international negotiations and bourgeois elections. We will cover this in detail later.

So in the critical year of 1977 the U.S. and Britain brought increasing pressure on the Smith regime to transfer power, while working to identify imperialism with the guerrillas. Young said that Washington just wanted **"to unwrite some real neglect and outright wrong-doing on the part of much of the West."** British Foreign Secretary David Owen praised the Zimbabwe guerrillas as **"essentially men of good will driven to take up arms."** Field Marshal Sir Michael Carver flew into Zimbabwe to become British Commissioner. Carver, who had commanded counter-insurgency operations against "Mau-Mau" in Kenya, announced: **"What I am basically committed to is that Rhodesia will become a basically Black country run primarily by Black Africans for the benefit primarily of Black Africans."** The imperialists even had their thugs trying to sound like the liberation movement. The neo-colonial operation to deep-freeze the Zimbabwe Revolution had been launched.

II. Installing the Neo-Colonial Agents

For U.S. imperialism to deflect the revolutionary war it was necessary for their hidden agents to subvert the liberation army. This was done in 1977, when a surprise coup installed Robert Mugabe and his clique over the ZIPA fighters. Mugabe pretends to have been the political leader of the liberation war, a pose that helped his ZANU-PF party into power and still helps cover for them. But Mugabe himself, who was imprisoned from 1964–74, did no political writing and had no communication with the liberation cadres, had nothing to do with building the guerrilla forces or guiding the war.

transferred to Tufts University in Massachusetts. Then came his return to Zimbabwe in 1963, followed by his arrest the next year. While most of the liberation detainees were held until late 1974 and early 1975, British pressure forced them to release a few early in 1971—most notably Edison Zvobgo and his cousin, Michael Mwema (also a founding ZANU Central Committee member).

Zvobgo briefly played a role in the founding of the ANC in 1972, before leaving to Zambia to begin exile. Once in Zambia he demonstrated how useful a move his release had been. In 1972 the ZANU guerrillas were just restarting their war after the 1969–72 "silent years" of retraining and base-building. But they were almost without support internationally except for China. The families of the fighters in Zambia often had no food. Zvobgo, as a leader with some familiarity with the international scene, was asked to lead fundraising and support for the fighters. He refused, saying that he had "sacrificed enough." (His cousin went even further, betraying the movement and being expelled from ZANU.) Now, Zvobgo said, he was moving to Amerika to give his family a better life.

It was at this time that Zvobgo was recruited to work for the CIA. Eddison Zvobgo was an unusual ex-convict and revolutionary exile. The Afrikan Bureau of the U.S. State Department arranged U.S. residency papers not only for Zvobgo and his immediate family, but also for other adult relatives. All got INS work permits. We can assure you that prominent Third World revolutionaries do not ordinarily get such a warm welcome from U.S. imperialism.

Zvobgo was instantly admitted to the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts. This has a certain significance. Fletcher is the elite training ground for U.S. imperialism in international diplomacy and affairs (with a tuition alone of over \$8,000 per year). It has a "hawkish" orientation, as we can tell by a recent report that an equal number of 1984 graduates will join the CIA as will join the State Department. U.S. Ambassador to El Salvador Thomas Pickering is a

the “Rhodesian” Special Branch (political police). In consternation the “Rhodesian” intelligence men told many of their closest Amerikan friends. One of these was right-wing author Robin Moore (of *The Green Berets* fame), who lived in Salisbury as “self-appointed ambassador” from the U.S. right. Moore wrote:

“Reliable African sources are charging that the CIA is backing Robert Mugabe, although it seems odd that the U.S. would back an avowed Marxist ... the link between the CIA and the Mugabe camp, working out of the United States, is said to be Karanga tribesman Edson Zvobgo. Zvobgo, a Rhodesian teacher of political science and at one time detained for terrorist sympathies, has established university connections in the United States as a cover for his political activities.”

Luckily for the CIA and their Zimbabwean friends, Moore’s comments were ignored as just the crazy mud-slinging of the white supremacist right-wing. Edison Zvobgo is currently the Zimbabwean Minister for Legal and Parliamentary Affairs, a Member of Parliament, member of the ZANU Central Committee, and one of Mugabe’s closest allies. Zvobgo and Mugabe have been close since their early days in the nationalist movement; at the founding of the Gwelo Congress of ZANU in 1963, Edison Zvobgo was elected Deputy to Mugabe as ZANU Secretary-General. Zvobgo, like almost all the other ZANU and ZAPU leaders, was arrested and imprisoned in 1964. He was, along with ZANU President Sithole (who later betrayed the revolution in prison), in the historic automobile full of ZANU leaders caught carrying dynamite into the capitol. At first glance Zvobgo might appear to be just like any other older revolutionary cadre in the Third World, like the many Vietnamese officials who underwent long imprisonment by the French in their struggle’s early years.

His relationship to U.S. imperialism surfaces when we look at his elite, petty-bourgeois career in the U.S. Beginning college at Pius XII University College in Lesotho, Zvobgo

He was, in fact, practically unknown by them until 1975.

Imperialist strategy was simple: **to co-opt the war, deflecting its political aims from liberation to bourgeois democracy** (“majority rule”), grant Afrikan government as quickly as possible so as to stop the growth of socialist consciousness. As one major history of the liberation war put it: “To prevent the radicalization of the Zimbabwean nationalist movement through armed struggle, Kissinger had to remove the cause of the war by making Smith concede majority rule. The Rhodesian leader, with his narrow vision of world realities, was not only expendable but had become a liability ... For the longer the war went on ... the more radical the guerrillas would become.” Kissinger’s “Afrika shuttle” negotiations failed in 1975, since his reactionary bent kept him from breaking with Smith. Now a new U.S. Carter administration was moving to co-opt the liberation struggle.

For this strategy Mugabe was the perfect tool. He was a prominent Afrikan teacher and nationalist politician, who had always been close to liberal church circles as a “Christian socialist.” Moreover, his tactical sense had always led him to pose as a “militant” or socialist, while in practice his concept of independence was precisely what Washington wanted—Afrikan “majority rule” in the form of bourgeois government.

In 1960 Mugabe, as the “militant” nationalist, had offered to pledge loyalty to “Rhodesia” if a new constitution gave him and other petty-bourgeois Afrikan politicians half the seats in the settler parliament. As late as 1975 Mugabe had agreed to the abortive South Afrikan “Détente” plan to promise Zimbabweans voting rights after five years—in return for which the ZANU and ZAPU guerrillas would be disarmed. During the proposed five-year pacification period only the settler army and police would be armed. Mugabe, like many other petty-bourgeois nationalist politicians, was always drawn to reformist deals.

In 1975 he avoided re-arrest by escaping to Mozambique, where he joined the ZANU military camps. Despite his old

1963 rank as ZANU Secretary-General, the army refused to accept him as their political leader. Four senior ZANU military commanders finally issued a statement friendly to Mugabe, but which explicitly limited his role to being a “middleman” (their word) in communications with the discredited bourgeois politicians. Yet there was no doubt Mugabe’s star was rising. In January 1976 Mugabe flew to London, where the British Broadcasting Corporation interviewed him at length on their *Focus on Africa* show. This popular radio program was beamed all over southern Afrika. Mugabe posed on the show as the “militant” defender of the guerrillas, attacking President Kaunda of Zambia for arresting and repressing ZANU fighters. This dramatic broadcast, which was the self-admitted “breakthrough” in Mugabe’s career, was, of course, arranged.

At that time the liberation war had undergone an important change. A new army, formed under Tanzanian-Mozambican directives from both ZANU and ZAPU (but actually almost totally from ZANU), had reopened the suspended liberation war on a greater scale than ever before. **ZIPA (Zimbabwe People’s Army) was also more radical than its earlier parent bodies.** New commanders had replaced the older ZANU commanders, while thousands of fresh fighters were being led to conduct a more political war. ZIPA published its own revolutionary journal. Women fighters were not only joining the fighting (instead of being only ammunition porters), but in a move against male chauvinism all training instructors were women fighters. ZIPA began organizing drives for the first time into areas of Zimbabwe far inland, away from the Mozambique border. The war spread as never before, on a far larger scale.

In March 1976 *Africa* magazine reported that: “A highly confidential study carried out by Major General Walls, the Rhodesian Chief of the Security Forces, explicitly warns that Rhodesia alone cannot contain a guerrilla offensive for much longer.” In many rural areas the settler forces could no longer even mount patrols. Settler bases were attacked



Joshua Nkomo, left, and Robert Mugabe leaving peace talks in Geneva in 1976. Photograph: Dieter Endlicher/AP

member of the Foundation Board and a member of the U.S. Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. **This shows us why the Ford Foundation was willing to fund an authorized, pro-Mugabe book on Zimbabwe that strongly downplayed the role of the CIA—and explicitly white-washed general U.S. Government involvement with any such CIA activity.**

* * *

The CIA’s search for critical penetration into the Zimbabwe armed struggle found success. In 1977 the CIA reached a secret agreement to support the Mugabe/ZANU-PF party to become the next government. This decision became known, of course, to the CIA’s local co-workers in Zimbabwe,

only a negative role. This is the result of one tentacle of “full-scale operation in Rhodesia” by the CIA.

General intelligence-gathering about the liberation movement is done using many instruments, with “academic cover” being the first level. U.S. imperialism, which had long left Afrika primarily to the main colonial occupiers, began to build up its intelligence net in the mid-1950s to catch up. In 1954 the CIA and American Metal Climax, the main U.S. minerals corporation in Zimbabwe, set up the African-American Institute to supervise brainwashing of Afrikan students, research on Afrikan liberation, and other such tasks. That same year William O. Brown shifted from the U.S. State Department Bureau of Intelligence to become the first head of the Boston University Afrikan Studies Program. In 1956 CIA Deputy Director Max Millikan shifted to the directorship of the CIA-funded MIT Center for International Affairs, a major research center on Afrikan liberation movements.

Since the CIA cannot act openly in Afrika, it pushed the creation of these university Afrikan Studies Programs. Since then, Afrika has been criss-crossed by U.S. “researchers,” “political scientists,” “doctoral candidates,” trying to interview liberation cadres and “research” guerrilla movements. It is widely known where such information goes.

CIA funding for such intelligence-gathering had to be “laundered.” For this the Government turned to the minerals corporations and, most notably, the private foundations. The Ford Foundation is the main funding instrument for covert CIA intelligence using “private sector” personnel in Afrika. In fact, the Ford Foundation is the primary source of funds for most of the major U.S. Afrikan Studies programs. This foundation also funds numerous scholarship programs so that Afrikan students can be indoctrinated in the U.S. Extensive links to the CIA have always been present: for example, Richard Bissell was on the Ford Foundation staff when he served as CIA Deputy Director. Edwin Land (whose Polaroid Corporation’s police services in South Afrika are well-publicized) was simultaneously a

repeatedly. **The fighters could see that unconditional military victory was definitely coming.** Fortified with this knowledge, the ZIPA command and the cadres rejected any imperialist deals, “talks” on compromises with imperialism, and all of the petty-bourgeois nationalist politicians who so desperately wanted to cut the revolution off. This absolutely included Mugabe and the other old ZANU politicians.

The ZIPA command began publicly moving to form a new revolutionary party out of the fighters themselves. ZIPA started appointing its own international representatives abroad, requested that all OAU solidarity funds come directly to its camps, and reluctantly sent its own separate delegation to sit alongside the old parties, ZANU, ZAPU, ANC, at the October 1976 international negotiations at Geneva. Mugabe and his clique were frightened, frantically issuing orders to the fighters which were all ignored. This was the most radical development of the independence struggle, although the ZIPA command was not itself a communist vanguard.

We should be precise on how much influence the Mugabe clique had on the army—almost none. While the ZIPA cadres had at first looked upon the old ZANU Supreme Council as still their political leadership, once they discovered that the old ZANU politicians were in favor of an imperialist deal to stop the revolution, they repudiated them. The old ZANU leaders were at first unable to even get permission to enter the military camps. Even when Josiah Tongogara, Mugabe’s factional ally and the famous head of the ZANU military, got into the Mozambique camps he was unable to persuade fighters to desert the ZIPA political line. Tongogara had a long friendship with Samora Machel and other FRELIMO leaders, and they encouraged the ZIPA guerrillas to get together with him. Yet even with this pressure, **after an entire month in the camps of lobbying and intrigues by Tongogara and other Mugabe clique leaders, the majority of the revolutionary army still refused to accept that leadership.**

What is primary is that it is the Afrikan masses who created the armed struggle, and it is they who always wanted to reclaim their land without any imperialist compromises or neo-colonial conditions. So in the 1960s, before Nkomo or Mugabe or any of the petty-bourgeois nationalist politicians had organized any armed activity, the Zimbabwe masses repeatedly staged violent urban uprisings and general strikes. The petty-bourgeois politicians learned to use, by rote, socialist and Pan-Afrikanist slogans, but only to appease the liberation activists. The ZIPA commanders, who used “Marxist-Leninist” rhetoric just as Mugabe and Nkomo did, were not really more advanced. **The important thing is that many Zimbabwe fighters wanted war to unconditional victory and socialism**—that’s why as long as the ZIPA commanders stuck to that program they had the support of the army. And it was within the ranks of the fighters that the first communist political consciousness was being born. That’s why U.S. imperialism had to stop the war, even if that meant abandoning their settler puppets.

At that time the role of the front-line states again became pivotal. We should give some background: the five front-line states—Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, Angola, and Botswana—were the hosts for the Zimbabwe liberation forces. Military bases, training camps, HQs, and civilian refugee camps all were on their territory. And it was from two bordering states—Zambia and Mozambique—that the fighters infiltrated back into Zimbabwe. FRELIMO in Mozambique had closer ties still to ZANU, whose troops it had trained and still fought beside in both Mozambique and Zimbabwe itself.

But the front-line regimes also had their own agendas. Born with distorted colonial economies linked to “Rhodesia” and South Afrika, Zambia and Mozambique lost millions of dollars from disruption of trade ties to the settlers. Both also suffered political-economic instability as the war spilled over into their national territories. For these reasons both conservative Zambian President Kaunda and socialist Mozambican President Samora Machel wanted a Zimbabwean settlement

U.S., an involved grievance procedure, emphasis on “bread-and-butter” issues, tactical focus on wage negotiations. This should only be expected, since all these dummy unions were subsidized and in large part used by the CIA. Both to get intelligence and to keep workers without any real organization. One of many instruments used by the CIA was the “International Confederation of Free Trade Unions” (ICFTU), the anti-communist union organization of the NATO powers. The ICTFU is led by the U.S. AFL-CIO and has a long, documented history of collaboration as a CIA instrument. An ICTFU official admitted in Zimbabwe in 1971: **“It is probably true that this country has received in recent years more international trade union assistance than any other country on the Afrikan continent ... There is not a union here which has not received assistance either directly or indirectly.”** While Afrikan workers in Zimbabwe fought their oppressors with waves of strikes, even in the face of gunfire and mass firings, their pro-Western unions opposed these and played



* * *

Both the authors and President Mugabe know full-well that the CIA is a dedicated enemy of the Zimbabwe Revolution, and has long been very active there. Why are they concealing this? The CIA's "fullscale operation" in Zimbabwe had three basic components: covert military aid to the Smith regime; intelligence-gathering; subversion-penetration operations against the liberation movement. The first component needs little explanation, being the familiar Bay of Pigs, El Salvador-type military operation. In Zimbabwe the CIA, acting directly or through the South Afrikan settler regime, furnished the tiny "Rhodesian" military (the settler security forces were smaller than the New York Police Dept.) with hundreds of key specialists in counter-insurgency war: unit commanders, pilots, helicopter mechanics, interrogation experts. This was the most openly menacing part of CIA operations in Zimbabwe, but was ultimately the least dangerous. In direct confrontation the Zimbabwe masses exposed the CIA as a paper tiger.

The CIA's intelligence and penetration operations were and are much more successful. In a variety of areas the CIA uses front-groups to monitor—and if possible to subvert—Zimbabwean politics. Afrikan trade unions in Zimbabwe were co-optive instruments legally sanctioned and regulated by the settler-colonial regime. Their No. 1 task was to persuade Afrikan workers not to strike (which was illegal, of course) or take part in the liberation struggle. As pay for pacifying the Afrikan workers, their union officials got to occupy one of the few petty-bourgeois positions open back then to Afrikans. Imperialism encouraged the Afrikan petty-bourgeoisie to open up many, many small competing unions (like "Mom and Pop" grocery stores) to disunite and confuse workers. By independence there were 52 Zimbabwean unions with an average membership of only 3,800.

These dummy unions were actually very modern—in a bourgeois, AFL-CIO style. They emphasized, just as in the

as quickly as possible. The wishes of the front-line states were usually orders, since both Zambia and Mozambique used their power to make the Zimbabwe movement do what they were told.

For example: in 1975 the front-line states halted the Zimbabwe armed struggle altogether. Zambian President Kaunda and South Afrikan General van den Bergh (chief of the infamous Bureau of State Security) had worked out a "Rhodesian" sell-out settlement in October 1974. When ZANU Chairman Herbert Chitepo complained to the OAU, Zambian officials told ZANU they would **"use muscle to crush ZANU."** On March 18, 1975, Chitepo was assassinated by a car bomb. **On this pretext the front-line states stopped the war;** arresting and, if necessary, killing the Zimbabwe cadre who resisted.

In Tanzania, Mozambique, and Zambia the ZANU guerrillas were disarmed and confined to their camps. In both Zambia and Tanzania all the Zimbabwe liberation offices were closed. Zambian police did mass arrests of ZANU officials, members and relatives, torturing many to extract confessions. Three ZANU military commanders who escaped into Mozambique were arrested by FRELIMO and returned to Zambian imprisonment. **Cut off, most of the Zimbabwe guerrillas inside the country were killed in renewed counter-insurgency offensives. By late 1975 less than fifty guerrillas were still active in Zimbabwe.** The "Rhodesian" regime was overjoyed.

But the "détente" sell-out collapsed in late 1975, as "Rhodesian" Prime Minister Ian Smith stupidly refused any watering-down of settler rule. Tanzanian President Julius Nyerere and Mozambique's Samora Machel decided that the Zimbabwe war had to restart. They rearmed and turned loose the thousands of impatient Zimbabwe fighters, reorganizing them into the new ZIPA.

By January 1977 both Mozambican and Tanzanian governments were angry that the new ZIPA had become so radical, that fighters were refusing to go along with the U.S.-British

negotiated deal that the front-line states wanted. Tanzania started arresting ZIPA political cadre, forbidding political education classes in the training camps. In Mozambique an unsuspecting ZIPA command were arrested by FRELIMO. All members of the ZIPA Military Committee were arrested except its chairman, Rex Nhongo, who had secretly gone over to the Mugabe faction. FRELIMO also arrested all the ZIPA Provincial Commanders, Base Commanders, Sector Commanders, and many General Staff members. Units were broken up and hundreds of ZIPA fighters executed. Once again the front-line states had disrupted the liberation war in order to enforce their policies on the Zimbabwe struggle.

So the Mugabe clique, unable to voluntarily gain leadership over the guerrillas, had been given command only by FRELIMO's armed intervention. Mugabe, Machel, and Tongogara have all admitted precisely this in published accounts. We must recall that Andy Young emphasized how U.S. imperialism had to get **the front-line states, as the only possible option, to disarm the revolutionary fighters**. U.S. imperialism's scenario turned out to be an accurate guide to events.

III. The CIA and ZANU-PF

We can begin examining CIA penetration in Zimbabwe by referring to a remarkable book: *Struggle for Zimbabwe* by David Martin and Phyllis Johnson, two British and Canadian reporters specializing in Afrika. This book is nothing less than the history of the liberation war according to Mugabe, Tongogara, and their clique. First published in 1981, the second edition (printed in the U.S. by Monthly Review and in Afrika by Zimbabwe House) has an introductory endorsement by President Mugabe himself. This, then, is an authorized, semi-official ZANU-PF account of the struggle. In Martin and Johnson's "acknowledgements" the authors reveal that: "Among those who gave much valuable time for interviews

and reading parts of the manuscript were the Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe, and his colleagues ... Thanks are due to the Ford Foundation which agreed to fund the final expenses for completion of the book ..." Why would the Ford Foundation pay for the writing of a British book which favorably pictures "Marxist-Leninist" Robert Mugabe and his allies as the "liberators" of Zimbabwe?

There is a curious hole in this history which starts to explain the Ford Foundation's friendly interest—the CIA. **The CIA almost never appears at all in this semi-official, pro-Mugabe history of the Zimbabwe struggle.** Outside of a one-line mention of CIA participation in an abortive U.S. foreign aid project, the **only** mention of the CIA is very strange. In telling about Kissinger's talks with "Rhodesian" Prime Minister Smith in September 1976, the book says:

"The United States had theoretically withdrawn official links with Rhodesia in 1969, but the CIA, with the full knowledge of their Rhodesian counterparts, had maintained **a fullscale operation in Rhodesia**. Kissinger, by referring to 'our own intelligence links,' confirmed this clandestine operation, and this embarrassed the CIA who had told the President and State Department that they had withdrawn from Rhodesia." (our emphasis)

We are supposed to believe that the U.S. Government, including the White House, was innocently unaware of CIA counter-insurgency operations in Zimbabwe (although the authors can't explain how Henry Kissinger then knew about it). The imperialists certainly would like us to believe such lies. It is starting to get clearer why the Ford Foundation paid for this book. And the CIA's "**fullscale operation in Rhodesia**"—why do the authors fail to write even one word about it? This book, endorsed by President Mugabe, makes it appear as though the CIA played little or no role in the Zimbabwe struggle. That certainly is the impression we're left with.